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ABSTRACT

The Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs presented to the Swedish Parliament a bill on the State cultural policy. In this bill there is given for the first time an overall view of the engagements of the State within the cultural field. It presents proposals for the eight goals of State cultural policy. It also contains a large number of concrete proposals for reforms, which consitute the first stage in a three-year plan for the development of cultural policy measures. The new reform proposals are: assistance to amateur activities, grants to cultural programs of cultural associations, increased support for free professional groups, clearer division of responsibilities within the cultural institutions, stimulation of the regional work of theatrical and musical institutions, a stronger status for the preservation of the cultural heritage, new organization for certain museums, increased support to people's parks and people's houses, a State cultural council to be established, and a three-year plan for State financial contributions. The bill is based on proposals from the Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs and the 1965 Commission on Museums and Exhibitions. (BP)

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SWEDISH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Government Bill on State Cultural Policy (1974:28)

Stockholm, April 1974

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THE SWEDISH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

P.O. Box
S-103 10 STOCKHOLM 2

GOVERNMENT BILL ON STATE CULTURAL POLICY (1974:28)

On March 20 the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs, Bertil Zachrisson, presented to Parliament a bill on the state cultural policy. In this bill there is given for the first time an overall view of the engagements of the state within the cultural field. It presents proposals for the goals of state cultural policy. It also contains a large number of concrete proposals for reforms, which constitute the first stage in a three-year plan for the development of cultural policy measures.

The bill is based on proposals from, in the first place, the Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs* and the 1965 Commission on Museums and Exhibitions. Parliament is expected to vote on the bill in May. It is estimated that certain proposals will be brought into effect as from July 1, 1974.

GOALS OF STATE CULTURAL POLICY

It is established that cultural policy is an element in the total political engagements of the state. The goals for the work of social change must also include cultural policy,

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* The National Council's proposal was summarized in 1973 in the publication "New Cultural Policy in Sweden - A Proposal".

which must therefore be seen as one of several instruments for creating a society characterized by equality and providing people with the means for a richer life.

Cultural equality is as important as economic and social equality. Material welfare is a prerequisite for people's liberation from compulsion, insecurity and worry. It is also a basis for enabling people to put their inherent possibilities to use. Possibilities of cultural experience however, do not follow automatically with increased material welfare. In the same way as resolute efforts are needed to create social and economic equality, so resolute efforts are required for the democratization of cultural life.

Cultural policy is a means of creating a welfare based on a wider concept than previously and aimed at broadening people's freedom of action and opportunities for development.

The bill summarizes the goals of cultural policy in <u>eight points</u>. Cultural policy should

- contribute to the protection of freedom of expression and to the creation of real conditions for the utilization of this freedom
- provide prople with the opportunity for creative activity and promote contact between people
- counteract the negative effects of commercialism within the cultural field
- promote decentralization of cultural activities and decision functions
- take into consideration the experience and needs of neglected groups
- permit artistic and cultural renewal
- guarantee that the culture of past times is preserved and kept alive
- promote an exchange of ideas and experience within the cultural field across linguistic and national boundaries.

IMPORTANT TASKS FOR THE POPULAR MOVEMENTS

Even if the proposals relate to state engagements, emphasis is placed on the fundamental responsibility of local and county councils for action within the cultural field. The importance of an active role being taken by the popular movements is stressed. Official bodies have no reason to conduct activities which can be performed as well or better by popular movements.

NEW ASSISTANCE TO AMATEUR ACTIVITIES

One of the most important new elements in the cultural policy presented is measures to improve the means for personal creative activity. A number of proposals for the stimulation of amateur activities are presented. Amateur activities are conducted to a large extent in the form of study circles - roughly one-third of the study circles are concerned with cultural subjects. Many of the proposals therefore aim at an intensification of study circle activities. During 1974/75* an increase of 54 million kronor** in the grant to study circles is calculated. This amount covers both an increase in the number of study circles and an increase of the allowance by 2 kr. per study period. The other proposals are briefly as follows:

- The regulations governing the work of study circles should be changed so as to facilitate amateur activities of a practical nature.
- Greater opportunities should exist for expert participation in study circles, and the fee should be raised from 30 to 40 kr. per study period, which, among other things, will facilitate the participation of cultural workers. Teachers of aesthetic and practical subjects at folk high schools should be able to include study circle teaching as part of their duties.
- Grants to the central organizations of the educational associations should be increased by 4 mkr. to 14.4 mkr. The

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* The Swedish budget year is July 1 - June 30

** One Swedish krona = (approx.) US $ 0.22 or £ 0.09

adult education organizations can thereby extend their programme and intensify the training of study circle leaders within the cultural field.

- The central amateur organizations, e.g. the choir associations and various orchestra organizations, should have their total annual grant raized by 0.4 mkr. to 1.2 mkr.
- A new grant should be introduced for experiment and development within amateur activities. For 1974/75 a sum of 2 mkr. is proposed. The money should be allocated by the proposed State Cultural Council to projects which cannot receive support by other means, e.g. via study circle grants. The projects may relate to new working methods in amateur activities and to trials in the extension of cultural activities to new groups and in new environments.

NEW GRANT TO CULTURAL PROGRAMMES OF CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS

Cultural associations arrange activities of various kinds, such as theatrical performances, concerts and exhibitions. To support these efforts a new state grant is proposed in place of the present grant for lecturing.

An amount of 6 mkr. is proposed for this purpose, an increase of 3.2 mkr. over the present grant.

INCREASED SUPPORT FOR FREE PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

Free professional groups and small ensembles working outside the cultural institutions have acquired an increasing importance in recent years. They have contributed to a vitalization and reneval of cultural life. It is proposed that state support be reinforced by 1.7 mkr. to 3.1 mkr.

The free groups also receive an increased indirect support through raising of the state grants to community centres by 0.4 mkr. to 1.1 mkr.

CLEARER DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

For a vital cultural activity the state cultural institutions must have independent powers of decision concerning the content and form of the activities. It is proposed that the function of the state should be limited to the issue of regulations concerning the tasks of an institution only in broad outline, and to the allocation of grants for the activity. It is important for the anchorage of a cultural institution in the life of the community that different community interests are represented on its board.

It is presumed that the board will decide only on questions relating to the direction of the institution's activities and on other important questions concerning such matters as planning, organization and finance. The head and other employees of the institution should be free to organize the activity in other respects. This freedom is a prerequisite for creative work.

STIMULATION OF THE REGIONAL WORK OF THEATRICAL AND MUSICAL INSTITUTIONS

One of the fundamental principles in the National Council's proposals was to support the regional work of the established cultural institutions. To stimulate this development a new system of state grants is proposed for regional and local institutions of theatre, dance and music, to cover 55 % of the staff expenses. Additional grants should be made for regional work and for newly formed institutions. The support to the institutions increases by 6.5 mkr. excluding automatic cost rises. This provides the means to start new institutions.

As theatrical and musical institutions successively become established in the regions, the role of the Institute for National Concerts, the Regional Music Organization and the Swedish National Theatre Centre will naturally be changed. Their function in the future will to a greater extent be that of coordination with the regional organizations and of supp-

lementation of the regional supply. During a very long time, however, there will be a continued need for their own production and for national tours of various kinds.

It is presumed that the institutions will collaborate with the audience organization Skådebanan at the places where it exists. The grant to Skådebanan increases by 0.4 mkr. to 1.1. mkr.

A STRONGER STATUS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

The preservation of the cultural heritage should be given a greater significance in community planning. To this end it is proposed that in the regional planning the county administration shall also be responsible for certain aspects of the preservation of the cultural heritage. Through association with the county administration those responsible for the preservation of the cultural heritage should have greater means to uphold their interest. At the same time it is presumed that the county museums will retain important functions. The new organization should be introduced on July 1, 1976

A new grant should be introduced for the museum work and work on preservation of the cultural heritage done by the county museums. This will strengthen them both as free cultural institutions in the field of museums and preservation of the cultural heritage and will enable them to fulfil certain functions in this respect for the Central Office of National Antiquities and the county administrations. Pending the reorganization the grant for preservation of the cultural heritage should be increased by 0.8 mkr.

NEW ORGANIZATION FOR CERTAIN MUSEUMS

The important role of the county museums in the cultural organization at regional level is emphasized. The state should, as noted, support their activities.

Certain general lines are drawn up for the organization of the state and state-supported museums. An important motive for coordination between state museum units is to extend the means for effective service to the regional museums.

The bill suggests a continued relationship between the Central Office of National Antiquities, the Museum of National Antiquities and the Mediterranean Museum. A large measure of independence is presumed within the common organization. The National Museum, the Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities are also presumed to constitute a unit with a joint board. The museum grants should be increased by 1.4 mkr. for the next budget year.

INCREASED SUPPORT TO PEOPLE'S PARKS AND PEOPLE'S HOUSES

The need for state support to the People's Parks and the People's Houses is to be investigated. In this connection the question of support to the Swedish Association of Rural Community Centres and the Våra Gårdar Association (temperance movement) should be considered. A reinforcement of state support for the People's Parks is proposed for the next budget year. A grant of 0.7 mkr. is proposed for the central administration and certain experimental work. The People's Houses should receive 0.2 mkr. for the showing of quality films through Bio Kontrast.

A STATE CULTURAL COUNCIL TO BE ESTABLISHED

In order that the new goals for cultural policy may be realized, a better basis for decisions by Government and Parliament is needed than that which the present state cultural administration can provide.

It is proposed that a new organ, the State Cultural Council,

should be set up as from October 1 this year. The Council would take over assignments from the Theatre and Music Council, the Committee on Periodicals and the Library Section of the Board of Education. The Council should have advisory and investigational functions and should be responsible for the examination of state grants. Among other things it should be responsible for the allocation of funds to free theatre groups, assistance to newspapers, experimentation and development work in the amateur field.

The board of the Council should include members with a broad experience of public affairs, among whom representatives of local councils, county councils, cultural workers' organizations and adult education organizations.

Under the board there should be three committees with advisory and, in certain questions relating to grants decision functions: one committee for theatre, music and dance, one for art, museums and exhibitions, and one for literature and libraries.

Investigational work will be an important task for the Cultural Council. The bill mentions various tasks of this kind. Among other things the Council should investigate questions of child culture and questions relating to the supply of commercial culture.

A THREE-YEAR PLAN FOR STATE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

State financial contributions should be augmented in accordance with a three-year plan. The direct cultural grants referred to in the bill should increase in the first year, apart from price and salary recalculations, by 25.5 mkr. Roughly half of this amount should go to free activities outside the institutions. Considerable additions should be made also to the grants to study circles and educational associations.

For the later part of the three-year plan measures within literature, art and films are considered especially urgent.

The forms for state assistance to cultural workers should also be decided upon. During the three-year period the reforms now initiated should be followed up. This implies, among other things, an extension of the support for amateur activities and cultural programmes within the popular movements. Grants to the regional activities of the theatrical and musical institutions should be reinforced. A new state grant should be introduced for the county museums.